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TO:

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FROM:

Distribution authorized to U.S. Gov't. agencies only; Test and Evaluation; 16 JUN 1971. Other requests shall be referred to Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Attn: FOR-OT-UT, Washington, DC 20310.

AUTHORITY

AGO D/A ltr, 29 Apr 1980

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310



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AGDA-A (M) (18 Jun 71) FOR OT UT 704085

30 June 1971

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 63rd
Signal Battalion, Period Ending 31 October 1970

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. The attached report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with para 4b, AR 525-15.
2. The information contained in this report is provided to insure that lessons learned during current operations are used to the benefit of future operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.
3. Information of actions initiated as a result of your evaluation should be forwarded to the Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, ATTN: FOR OT UT within 90 days of receipt of this letter.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

VERNE L. BOWERS
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

1 Incl
as

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TANT CHIEF OF STAFF FOR FORCE DEVELOPMENT (ARMY)
ATTN: FOR OT UT, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20310

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters, 63rd Signal Battalion
APO 96308

SCCPV-PG-PB-OP

13 November 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion, Period Ending 31 October 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2).

SEE DISTRIBUTION:

1. Section 1, Operations: Significant Activities

(a) On a contingency exercise called by the 12th Signal Group on 20 August 1970, a unit of the 63rd Signal Battalion tested its skills. Operations order 33-70 directed the 596th Signal Company (SPT) to establish, under simulated tactical conditions, a 12 channel VHF system between Camp Leslie and Camp Vicky and to establish a HF/RATT station in the XXIV Corps HF/RATT net. The Operations Order was received by the Battalion at 0907 hours. By 1420 hours, the signal sites were established and all circuits were operational. The exercise was terminated at 1520 and was critiqued by the 12th Signal Group observer team. The contingency team experienced problems in VHF antenna erection but the exercise was successfully completed. With the high turn-over of personnel within the Battalion, periodic practice sessions are required to develop the necessary skills and teamwork.

(b) As units from MRI moved south and returned to the States, the communications requirements of the area have shifted accordingly. When the Naval Construction Battalion moved out of Gia Le in late August the need for circuits to that area was significantly reduced. Other subscribers in the Gia Le area were connected by cable to the main communication facilities at Camp Eagle. This permitted the deactivation of system FFH-81 on 25 August 70. Consequently the Gia Le site was no longer needed and it was deactivated on 28 September 70. By consolidating the signal sites in the area, the Battalion reduced its personnel requirements and made more efficient use of its signal equipment.

(c) Similarly, the FFH53 system between Hue MACV HQ and Phu Bai was deactivated on 2 September 70 as the Integrated Communications System (ICS) of the Regional Communications Group (RCG) was upgraded between these areas. The circuits over the 24 channel FFT24 system between Phu Bai and Da Nang were routed over other systems and the FFT24 system was deactivated on 11 September 70 without loss of service to subscribers.

FOR OT UT
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Inclosure

(1)

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Through such deactivations and consolidations the Battalion has been able to continue its mission while sustaining a cut in Battalion strength of 16% during the quarter.

(d) The Battalion mission also includes cable construction. On 31 August 1970, USASTRATCOM Heavy Cable Construction Detachment (HCCD) was given the task of installing 15,000 feet of 100 pair, 22 gauge cable between the Hue MACV site and the Hue Citadel site according to Communications Systems Engineering and Management Agency (CEMA) Task Order 002-71.

(e) The purpose of the project was to give the 1st ARVN Division access to the Integrated Communications System (ICS) terminal at Hue, RVN and to provide trunks between the 1st ARVN Division Hue Citadel switchboard and the province Headquarters switchboard at the Hue MACV site. Materials necessary to install the cable according to the original plan did not arrive on schedule so a portion of the cable was routed along an existing cable run using existing poles, messenger, and hardware. During the project, men from the 1st ARVN Division Signal Battalion worked with the HCCD teams in the "Buddies Together" program learning cable construction, splicing techniques and termination procedures. The cable at Hue Citadel was terminated in an enclosed frame room instead of at the existing, exposed terminal box. The cable will be terminated at each terminal and tested by 10 November.

(f) The Battalion has also made some major inside plant improvements during the past quarter. When the VHF communication facilities of the 596th Signal Company (SPT) were first installed at the 8th Radio Research Field Station compound in Phu Bai, the planning and construction was hasty at best. The cables had been terminated haphazardly in a cramped, poorly lighted, frame room. It had been difficult to locate circuit pairs and to troubleshoot circuit outages. Carbon blocks in the frame would pop out for no apparent reason causing frustrating delays in fault isolation. Cold solder joints in the frame would crack or become loose causing poor quality circuits or circuit outages. Throughout the quarter the patch panel controllers and frame technicians of the 596th Signal Company worked to build a new, well-lighted, air conditioned frame room with neat, clearly labelled pin block terminations and adequate working space. The new frame does not have carbon blocks. With the old frame, many circuits were permanently wired through and were not accessible at the patch panel. Now, all circuits will be accessible at the patch panel. The eight systems that passed through Phu Bai Control were successfully cut over to the new frame on 23 October 1970. The Battalion fully expects fewer circuit problems and much faster circuit restoral on circuits passing through this new frame.

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(g) At 0800H hours on 25 October 1970, the 596 Signal Company received their operations order directing them to test a HF radio system from Phu Bai to Long Binh. The 596th set up an AN/GRC-142 site and erected a doublet antenna in the Battalion area at Phu Bai. The Long Binh site, manned by the 53rd Signal Battalion, set up their AN/GRC-122. After a few initial problems, contact was made by voice and by RTT using first the doublet and then the whip antenna. The exercise was interrupted by a power outage at Long Binh and a few other minor technical problems. It was not determined whether communications could be maintained during the entire 24 hour atmospheric cycle because the power outage coincided with the most likely time for atmospheric interference. The test did establish that high quality voice and secure RTT communications could be established between these points in a number of frequency bands and using both the doublet and whip antennas.

(h) As the quarter wore on, the monsoons came with their inevitable problems for the communicator. The Tan My Island site, operated by the 63rd Signal Company of the Battalion, had been established in April of 1970. October was the beginning of the first monsoon season for the site. Tan My Island is essentially a large flat sand bar off the Vietnam coast. After continual rain for several days and high tides in the area, the water rose to the very edge of the commcenter and radio vans on 31 October 70. Despite efforts to raise the equipment and build sandbag dikes against the water, rising water threatened to flood vital generator parts and produced very hazardous conditions for equipment operators. After getting permission to close down the site and notifying subscribers, the site was closed for 5½ hours until the water subsided.

(i) On the morning of 25 October 70 the high winds of typhoon Kate struck Da Nang. The 337th Signal Company (MW/TROPO) had checked out their towers before the storm had reached the coast and had found that all was as secure as possible within the constraints of their location. The 60 and 72 foot towers at the Da Nang Tropo site carried antennas for four systems: the quad-diversity 77UT5L system to Quang Tri; the FFM07 and FFM06 microwave systems to Camp Horn and the USMC Force Logistics Command, respectively; and the 77UT52 system to Phu Bai. A large, back-up antenna for one of the tropo systems was mounted on a revetment. Since there was not enough room in the area to anchor guy wires directly to the ground, guy wires were secured to telephone poles and to revetments. In a freak accident, the tropo antenna that was mounted on a revetment was blown off its supports by the 65 knots winds of Kate. The antenna fell, slicing a tower guy wire. The tower, in turn, tottered in the wind and finally crashed into the second tower toppling it.

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With both towers down, all four systems were off the air. The task of erecting new antennas and rebuilding the system began immediately. New tower sections arrived from the 1st Signal Brigade within 24 hours. Work began immediately on the new 60 foot and 84 foot towers. Antennas, wave-guide, and G-line were collected to reconstruct the four antenna systems.

(j) While the towers were being reconstructed, controllers from the Regional Communications Group (RCG) and the 63rd Signal Battalion worked frantically to re-route high priority circuits. There were a large number of circuits that went over systems and equipment of both the Regional Communications Group (RCG) and the 63rd Signal Battalion. Many circuits were cut over from the 77UT52 to the corresponding RCG system and logged back in. RCG had to activate equipment that was still pending RCG acceptance in order to alt-route these circuits.

(k) On 26 October, the 77UT52 system came back on the air using a single antenna at Da Nang Tropo. The FFM07 system was logged back in on 29 October 70 and was upgraded from a 24 to a 45 channel system on 30 October by adding the back-up, multiplexing equipment to the primary system. The upgrade was necessary to restore high priority circuits that were out because of cable outages in the Da Nang area. The FFM06 system was logged in on 31 October 70; the 77UT52 was upgraded to dual diversity on 3 November 70; and the 77UT5L system to Quang Tri was restored as a quad diversity system on 6 November 70. The Battalion was fortunate to find within its ranks an officer and a young specialist who had previous tower erecting experience. The towers would not have been erected again so quickly without their expertise and diligent efforts.

(l) An important and continuing activity of the Battalion throughout the quarter has been training personnel. This includes ARVN as well as US personnel. The men of the 63rd Signal Battalion participated in the "Buddies Together - Cung Than Thien" program, working together and training ARVN soldiers in various signal and signal-related MOS's. This program included training in aerial installation of cable, installation and operation of VHF and carrier systems, operation and maintenance of generators, cable splicing, operation and maintenance of manual telephone switchboards, troubleshooting circuits, frame installation and repair, and vehicle maintenance. No less than thirty four ARVN's have completed training in various MOS's during the quarter. Although the language barrier continues to be a problem, having a roving interpreter at large sites has somewhat alleviated the problem. TM's written in Vietnamese have also proven very helpful although they are extremely hard to get. As the quarter closed the program was being expanded to include training in teletype operations.

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(m) The Battalion has attempted to take full advantage of the training programs offered by the Southeast Asia Signal School #1. US personnel attended the following school courses:

<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Number of Personnel</u>
1. AN/TRC-24 Operators Course	1
2. AN/TRC-90 Operators Course	7
3. Cable Splicers Course	7
4. PCM (High Capacity) Operators Course	12
5. PCM (Medium Capacity) Operators Course	2
6. Personnel Clerk Refresher Course	1
7. Telephone Installation and Repair Course	5
8. Telephone Key Systems Maintenance Course	<u>1</u>

Total 36

(n) Members of the Battalion also participated in the following, non-signal training courses:

1. Americal Division Combat Leaders Course	2
2. Contract Officer Representatives (COR) Course	2

Training classes were also conducted within the Battalion. The S-4 section conducted classes on Materiel Readiness and Battalion Maintenance personnel conducted classes on generator operation and maintenance.

2. Section 2. Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations and Recommendations.

a. Personnel. None

b. Operations.

(1) Water in Generator Fuel Drums

(a) OBSERVATION. Water accumulates in the bottom of 55 gallon fuel drums.

(b) EVALUATION. The water in the drums comes from condensation on the inside of the drum and from heavy rainfall penetrating the seal at the point the fuel line enters the barrel. Fuel drums should be completely drained periodically and then filled with uncontaminated fuel. Covering the fuel drums with a tin roof or with canvas will reduce this problem.

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(c) RECOMMENDATION. That fuel drums be emptied and refilled with uncontaminated fuel on a regular basis and that fuel drums be sheltered from the rain.

(2) Buried Cable Splices in RVN

(a) OBSERVATION. The incidence of cable troubles increases with the monsoon rains and a large majority of these problems are caused by wet underground splices.

(b) EVALUATION. Watertight underground splices require sealing compound which this unit has had difficulty obtaining. When sealing compound is not available, splices must be raised above ground if wet splice problems are to be avoided.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That sealing compound be made more readily available to Cable Construction units. Splices have to be raised above ground and protected when sealing compound is not available.

(3) Use of AN/TCC-4 in conjunction with AN/TRC-111

(a) OBSERVATION. When the AN/TCC-4 and AN/TRC-111 were used together in a system, output signals of the AN/TRC-111 were highly distorted.

(b) EVALUATION. The AN/TRC-111 is the new generation of microwave equipment while the AN/TCC-4 is from an older generation of carrier equipment. Operators were accustomed to setting the output switch on the AN/TCC-4 at 0dbm. The new generation microwave equipment requires a carrier input of -15 dbm for proper operation. This can be corrected by changing the output switch on the AN/TCC-4.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That operators be made aware of the fact that newer generations of microwave equipment require a lower input level than the older equipment did. In particular, the AN/TCC-4 should be operated at -15 dbm output when used with the AN/TRC-111.

(4) Antenna Guy Stakes in Marshy Areas

(a) OBSERVATION. Doublet antennas blow down easily when ordinary guy stakes are used in wet marshy areas.

(b) EVALUATION. The issued guy stakes are not long enough for these conditions. Eight foot engineer stakes driven at a 45 degree angle will hold the antenna up in almost gale force winds.

31 November 1970

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(c) RECOMMENDATION. That engineer stakes be used in place of the issued stakes under these conditions.

(5) Grounding Spare Pairs at Frame

(a) OBSERVATION. Current instructions from higher headquarters require that all unused cable pairs on distribution frames be grounded. In the past, unused cable pairs have been grounded by strapping all pins of unused cable pairs together with a single, continuous conductor. This made it difficult to test and use these cable pairs.

(b) EVALUATION. Instead of using one continuous conductor between pins, individual insulated straps should connect the pins of unused pairs to a bus bar that runs to the ground. Fault isolation and correction would be easier and faster if this method were used.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That this method be used whenever this situation arises.

e. Training. None

d. Intelligence.

(1) Background Investigations

(a) OBSERVATION. Very few 72B's, Commcenter Specialists, arriving in Vietnam have had Background Investigations initiated.

(b) EVALUATION. Shortages of office equipment, qualified clerk typists, and travel restrictions in RVN makes preparing and processing Background Investigations time-consuming and difficult, especially at the Battalion level. Many commcenters in RVN are currently being upgraded to handle TOP SECRET materials. Commcenter specialists with Background Investigations are essential in RVN.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. Background Investigations on 72B's should be initiated prior to graduation from Advanced Individual Training.

e. Logistics.

(1) Replacement of Exhaust Manifold Crossover Pipes

(a) OBSERVATION. Exhaust manifold crossover pipes on 10 kw generators have a short life span in RVN. The pipes burn out rapidly when the generator is in continuous use and repair parts are frequently not available for extended periods.

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(b) EVALUATION. A good field expedient for this part can be manufactured locally out of 1 inch diameter electrical conduit or similar material.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. This field expedient should be implemented by other units while awaiting parts. It is also recommended that a more durable exhaust manifold for this generator be developed.

f. Organization.

(1) TAADS Actions

(a) OBSERVATION. This Headquarters submitted three emergency requests for MTOE changes under the provisions of para 2-52, AR 310-49 on 16, 22 and 24 May 70.

The subject of these letters were as follows:

(1) Dated 16 May 1970, MTOE 11-117G C09 for 63rd Signal Company (SPT) 63rd Signal Battalion.

(2) Dated 22 May 1970, MTOE 11-117G C02 for 596th Signal Company (SPT) 63rd Signal Battalion.

(3) Dated 24 May 1970, MTOE 11-117G C04 for 588th Signal Company (SPT) 63rd Signal Battalion.

Final action has yet to be taken on these requests.

(b) EVALUATION. These requests were for authorization for personnel and equipment to operate and maintain XXIV Corps RATT stations, and for 18,000 BTU air conditioners required for the continuous operation of Battalion signal equipment. The Battalion has had difficulty obtaining personnel for the RATT stations and air conditioner maintenance since these positions are not a validated requirement. The personnel that have been obtained are denied deserved promotions because they are filling unauthorized positions. Tools for air conditioner maintenance are extremely difficult to obtain for lack of authorization. Approval to write-off an air conditioner for valid combat damage was denied because the air conditioner was not authorized.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That action be taken to accelerate the processing of TAADS action for units in a combat zone.

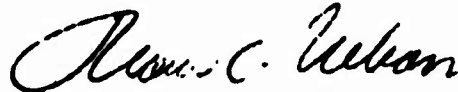
SCCPV-PG-PB-OP

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SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion, Period Ending 31 October 1970, RCS CSFOR-65(R2).

g. Other.

3. Section 3. Headquarters Department of the Army Survey: (Omitted unless specifically required by direction of DA as outlined in para 5b (3), AR 525-15).



THOMAS C. NELSON
LTC, SigC
Commanding

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DISTRIBUTION:

- 2 cy - Commander in Chief, USARPAC, ATTN: GROP-DT, APO 96558
- 3 cy - Commanding General, USARV, ATTN: AVHGC-DST, APO 96375
- 1 cy - Commanding General, USASTRATCOM-PAC, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii
APO 96557
- 1 cy - Commanding General, 1st Signal Brigade, (USASTRATCOM), ATTN: SCCPV-OP,
APO 96348
- 10 cy - Commanding Officer, 12th Signal Group, ATTN: SCCPV-PG-COPE, APO 96349

SCCPV-FG-COPE (15 Nov 70) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned, Headquarters 63rd
Signal Battalion, Period Ending 31 October 1970, RCS
GSFCR-65 (R2).

DA, Headquarters, 12th Signal Group, APO 96349, 28 November 1970

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development
Department of the Army
Washington, D.C. 20310

Commanding General
1st Signal Brigade (USASTRATCOM)
ATTN: SCCPV-OP
AP0 96384

- 1. Subject report is forwarded in accordance with 1st Signal**
Brigade Regulation 1-19.
- 2. This Headquarters has reviewed the report and concurs in it with**
the following comments and/or exception:

Para 2b(3): The proper output level of a teletype multiplex
system (AN/TCC-4 in this example) is determined by the type of
voice channel multiplex equipment the signal is being fed into, it
is not determined by the type of radio equipment in use as indicated
in reference paragraph. Furthermore the level of the AN/TCC-4 should
be -17dBm ±2dBm below the channel test tone level of the voice
channel multiplex equipment, without regard to whether it is being
used with old or new multiplex equipment.


D. W. OGDEN, JR.
COL, SigC
Commanding

SCCPV-OP-CC (13 Nov 70) 2d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (Headquarters 63d Signal
Battalion) Period Ending 31 October 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

DA, HQ, 1st Signal Brigade (USASTRATCOM), APO 96384 15 Dec 70

TO: Commanding General, United States Army, Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST,
APO 96375

1. Subject report is forwarded in accordance with AR 525-15.

2. This headquarters has reviewed the report and concurs in it as
indorsed with the following comment:

a. Reference item, "Buried Cable Splices in RVN" pg.(6)., para. 2.
b.(2). This HQ was not aware of the problem of obtaining sealing compound
for underground cable splices. Action is being taken to eliminate the
problem.

b. Reference, pg.(7)., para. 2.e. Training should read para. 2.c.
Training.

c. Reference item, "Replacement of Exhaust Manifold Crossover Pipes"
pg.(7)., para. 2.e.(1). This headquarters was unaware of the short life
span of the exhaust manifold crossover pipes on the 10KW generators.
Coordination with USAMECOM revealed that this has occurred in several cases,
with various field expedients applied. The field expedient, using 1 inch
electrical conduit or similar material is a sound idea. However, it is
recommended that the following action be taken:

(1) Submit an EIR in accordance with TM38-750.

(2) Include in the EIR the average time equipment is operated
daily and a close estimate of the engine time.

(3) Submit O2 request for subject pipe, install upon receipt and
save locally fabricated pipe as back-up.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


T. M. BEYERSDORF
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

CF:

Commanding General, U.S. Army Strategic Communications Command,
ATTN: SCC-OPS-RT, Ft Huachuca, Arizona 85613
Commanding Officer, 12th Signal Group, APO 96349
Commanding Officer, 63d Signal Battalion, APO 96308

AVHDO-DO (13 Nov 70) 3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned Headquarters 63rd Signal
Battalion, Period Ending 31 October 1970, RCS CSFOR-05(R2)

Headquarters, United States Army Vietnam, APO San Francisco 96375 5 MAR 1971

THRU: Commanding General, United States Army Strategic Communications
Command-Pacific, APO 96557

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT,
APO 96558

1. This Headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 October 1970 from Headquarters, 63rd Signal Battalion and concurs with comments of indorsing headquarters.

2. Reference item concerning "TAADS Actions," page 8, paragraph 2f(1). The recommendation that action be taken to accelerate the processing of TAADS action for units in a combat zone has merit. Emergency requests for MTOE changes for subordinate units of 1st Signal Brigade are forwarded through, USASTRATCOM channels and not through this Headquarters. Unit has been so advised.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

R. E. Thompson
R. E. THOMPSON

CPT, AGC

Assistant Adjutant General

Cy furn:
1st Sig Bde
63rd Sig Bn

SCCP-OP-OCO (13 Nov 70) 4th Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned Headquarters 63rd Signal
Battalion, Period Ending 31 October 1970, RCS CSFOR-65(R2)

Headquarters, United States Army Strategic Communications Command-Pacific,
APO San Francisco 96557

25 MAR 1971

THRU: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT,
APO 96558
Commanding General, United States Army Strategic Communications
Command, ATTN: SCC-PO-CEFF, Fort Huachuca, Arizona 85613

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of
the Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

1. Subject report is forwarded in accordance with AR 525-15.
2. Reference paragraph 2f(1), page 8, basic document. The problem presented in this item has been addressed in separate correspondence to higher headquarters. Records this headquarters reveal that the MTOEs identified in this item were processed through this headquarters on 13 July 1970. The MTOEs were subsequently approved by Headquarters, USASTRATCOM and forwarded to DA for final approval on 10 September 1970.
3. This headquarters concurs with the remainder of the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



ANN M. RIOU
CPT, WAC
Acting Asst AG

CF:

CG, USARV, APO 96375 wo incl
CG, 1st Sig Bde (USASTRATCOM), APO 96384 wo incl
CO, 12th Sig Gp (USASTRATCOM), APO 96349 wo incl
CO, 63d Sig Bn (USASTRATCOM), APO 96308 wo incl

GPOP-DT (13 Nov 70) 5th Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report Lessons Learned of HQ, 63d Signal
Battalion, for Period Ending 31 October 1970,
RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)


HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 9 APR 1971

THRU: ~~Commanding General, United States Army Strategic -~~
~~Communications Command, ATTN: SCC-PO-CEFF, Fort Huachuca,~~
~~Arizona 85613 -~~

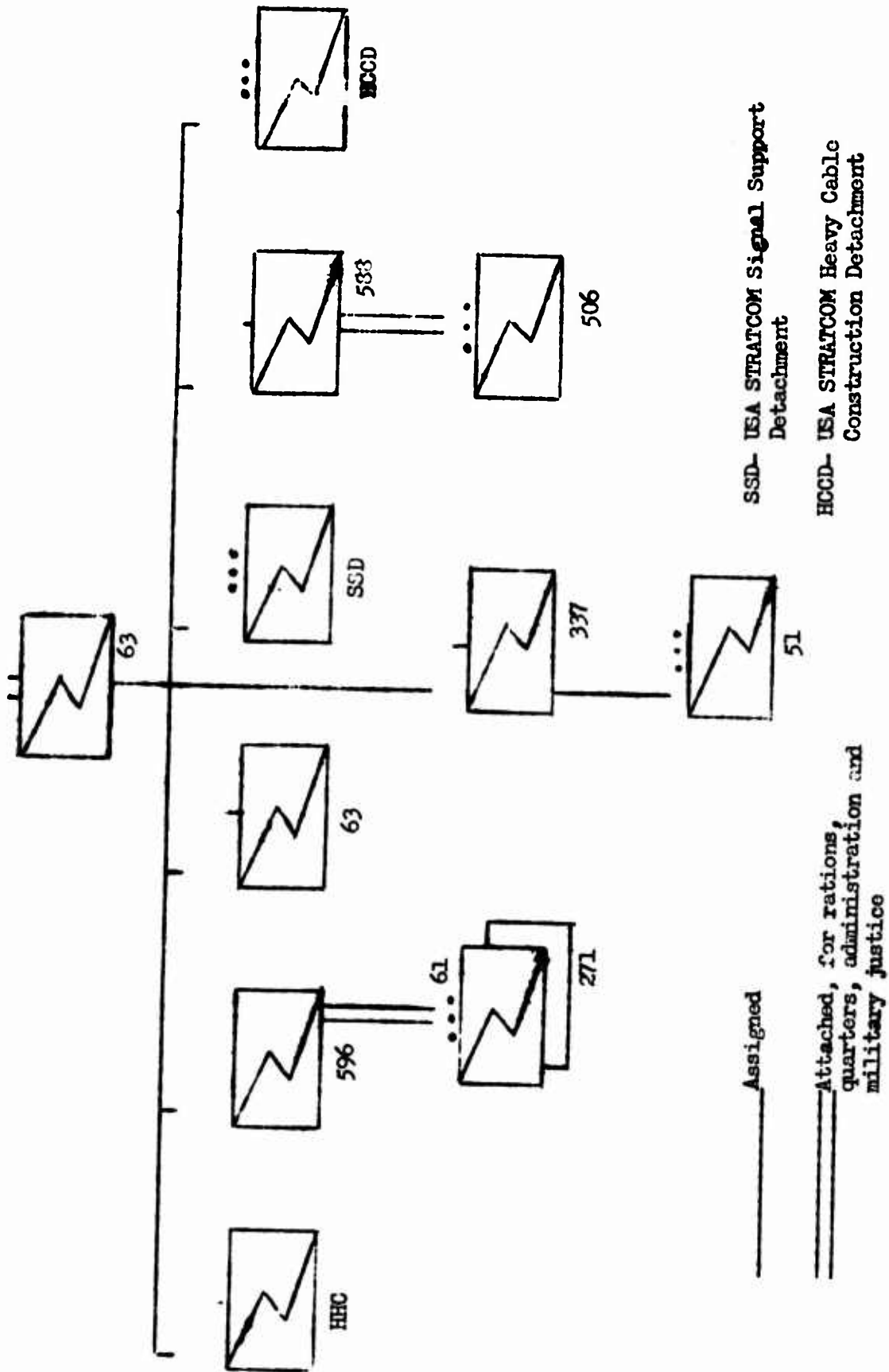
TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department
of the Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters concurs in subject report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:


D. D. CLINE
1LT, AGC
Asst AG

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



UNCLASSIFIED

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Experiences of unit engaged in counterinsurgency operations, 1 Aug to 31 Oct 70.			
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CO, 63rd Signal Battalion			
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